

H1-B TECHNICAL SKILLS TRAINING GRANTS

Grantee: Philadelphia Workforce Investment Board

Round: 3 **Region:** 2

Grant Amount: \$2,797,189

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Duration of Grant: November 15, 2000 to November 14, 2002

Population Served: A total of 300 people: 175 of these with known disabilities (100 of those will be unemployed while 75 will be employed in an IT industry but in dead-end positions.); another 125 -- both employed and unemployed -- will have "hidden disabilities."

Geographic Area Served: Philadelphia, Delaware, and Chester

Targeted Industries/

Jobs/Skills: Microsoft Certified Systems Engineer, Cisco Certified Internet Expert, Web Design, Client Server Applications Development.

Uniqueness of Proposal: Project will begin to bridge the gap between needed IT workers and disabled individuals by first establishing a vibrant Industry Advisory Board led by the CEOs of the 4 lead companies. It defines IT occupations being filled by those with H-1B visas. It will identify occupations with greatest need for trained workers. It will share industry requirements to create new training curricula. It will provide funds for training on a matching basis using monies currently used for recruitment or finders fees. It will provide "virtual" training" perhaps on the web. InspiriTec merges IT tech skills with a holistic approach to the special needs of disabled trainees. The project will provide intense case management, transportation and child care services. The project will introduce a new way of looking at the target population.

Partnerships: InspiriTec, Opportunity Center Incorporated, Philadelphia Workforce Development Board, the Delaware Workforce Development Board, Phila. Workforce Development Corporation, and a consortium of employers, Sunoco Oil, Atofino chemicals, and the Society for Information Management. Training Providers include LaSalle University, the PA Office of Vocational Rehabilitation, the DE Division of Voc Rehabilitation, Delaware Technical Community College, and the Thomson Institute

THE NEED: There is a great need for IT workers in the region. The Philadelphia *Inquirer* recently ran 28 pages of ads for high tech workers. There were 296 jobs for website developers, 277 for network engineering, 216 for server database development and more.

BRIEF OVERVIEW OF PROJECT: An employer-focused program, this IT Training for disabled

and under served populations targets the high demand IT positions which are often filled through the H-1B visa program. It is a multi-county, multi-state, regional partnership to train disabled people in IT skills. It will show employers who are trying to meet the high demand for workers how to harness the skills of the disabled.